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Water is Life

Caring for Your Lawn and Environment

Spring is the season for growth and new beginnings. During this season, most green thumbs are busy beautifying their property by planting flowers or re-landscaping lawns. The following tips can help your yard flourish, as well as protect our streams, lakes and rivers.

Fertilizer Application: Everyone wants a green, lush yard, mimicking a golf course fairway and using fertilizer achieves this admirable landscape. However, when fertilizer washes into lakes and streams, it creates harmful algae blooms, fosters aquatic weed growth, lowers dissolved oxygen levels and can release ammonia that is toxic to fish. Follow these brief guidelines when using fertilizer:

- ⌘ Avoid fertilizing in drought conditions and when heavy rain is predicted.
- ⌘ Use a drop or rotary spreader with a deflector shield around waterways.
- ⌘ Calibrate fertilizer spreaders to ensure proper rates are applied.
- ⌘ Use slow-release forms of nitrogen.
- ⌘ Sweep fertilizer if it falls on paved surfaces and apply it to the lawn.
- ⌘ Irrigate the lawn to minimize runoff.



Grass and Yard Clippings: After mowing the grass, you typically rake the clippings and dump them; however, if you leave grass where it falls, then the clippings can act as a natural fertilizer.

Pesticides: Pesticides may eliminate pests, but if not used with caution, the chemicals can harm animals, other plants and people. So remember, BEFORE you handle or apply any pesticide, read the label carefully and follow the directions. You can also reduce, or eliminate, using pesticides by following the suggestions in the box to the right:

Equipment Maintenance and Clean Up:

Maintaining your equipment is an integral part of maintaining your lawn. You'll find that something as simple as cleaning off your lawn mower helps protect our waterways.

- ⌘ Plant disease resistant varieties of flowers and shrubs.
- ⌘ Clean up pest-infected plant waste in the fall.
- ⌘ Pull up weeds by hand.
- ⌘ Attract birds and other natural pest predators to your yard.
- ⌘ Use mulches to hold down weeds, conserve moisture and prevent erosion.



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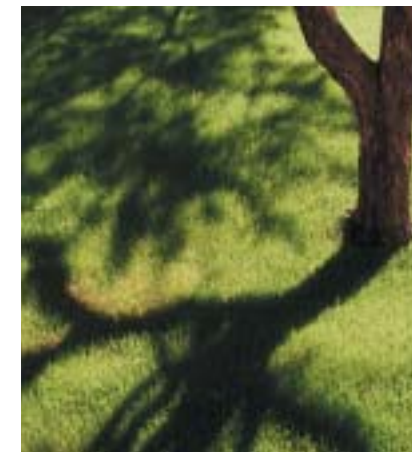
IN THE KNOW

AUGUSTA UTILITIES DEPARTMENT | SPRING 2005

Irrigation for Spring

By Sid Mullis,
Augusta-Richmond County Extension Service

Automatic irrigation systems are convenient, especially for those who travel. If installed and programmed properly, automatic irrigation systems can save you money and help in water conservation, but first, you must understand your irrigation system and all it is capable of doing.



Automatic irrigation systems have a time clock, or controller, you set to turn the water on. You can adjust automated controllers, on most models, for different seasons, weather patterns and particular water needs of plants or turf grass. Doing this can decrease water waste and maximize your system.

A Top Performer

The James B. Messerly Water Pollution Control Plant, located on Doug Barnard Parkway, has been compliant with state and federal treatment requirements for 23 months, which places the facility among the top plants in the State.

Completion of a full calendar year without a violation qualifies the facility for a Gold Award from the Georgia Water & Pollution Control Association and a Peak Performance Award from the Association of Metropolitan Sewage Agencies.

Operation Management International, Inc. (OMI) operates the Messerly

Plant through a contract with the City of Augusta. OMI's Augusta Project Manager, Mark Andrews, attributes their ongoing success to the strong partnership between OMI and the Augusta Utilities Department.

"The commitment by the Commissioners to provide adequate funding for any needed plant improvements has given OMI the tools

necessary to do our job well," said Andrews.

"So congratulations to all AUD and OMI employees involved in achieving this great performance record," said Allen Saxon Jr., Assistant Director for Wastewater Treatment.

"This is a tremendous achievement for our water pollution control plant"

– Max Hicks
Augusta Utilities Director

Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact plans to protect man.

– Stewart Udall
Author, lawyer, environmental activist, Congressman and Secretary of Interior under President Kennedy

TIPS FOR SPRING!

Conserve Water Now for Heavy Summer Usage

As a homeowner, there are many things you can do to save water and most are relatively inexpensive. Those with an associated cost usually pay for themselves with savings on your water bill. Following are ways to conserve water now, to allow for heavier summer usage:

- Sweep your driveway and sidewalk with a broom instead of using a hose.
- Direct downspouts and other runoffs towards shrubs and trees.
- Weed your lawn and garden regularly. Weeds compete with other plants for nutrients, light and water.
- Check your sprinkler system periodically for leaks.
- Use the minimum amount of fertilizer needed – it also increases water consumption.
- Landscape your lawn with low water-use plants.
- Aerate your lawn so water will reach the roots instead of running off the surface.
- Adjust sprinkler heads to only water your lawn – not your home or sidewalk.
- Divide your watering cycle into shorter time increments.
- Use a soaker hose when watering a slope to prevent wasteful runoff.
- Do not water on windy days.
- Use the sprinkler for larger areas of grass, but water smaller patches by hand.
- Bathe your pets outdoors in an area in need of water.



KIDS WANT TO COOL OFF?

Place the sprinkler in an area where your lawn needs it.

CSRA TMDL Group Monitoring Our Water Quality

The Augusta Utilities Department has joined with other public and private users of the Savannah River from Georgia and South Carolina to form the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Group. This group was formed to take part in the regulatory proceedings, which affect water quality in the Savannah River Watershed. The CSRA TMDL Group is committed to ensuring the procedures are driven by science, efficiency and practical decision-making, as well as preservation of our river for future generations to enjoy.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a draft TMDL

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD (TMDL):

a determination of the maximum amount of a particular pollutant that can be allowed to enter a stream or other body of water without causing the water to violate established water quality standards

document in the summer of 2004 in response to low dissolved oxygen levels in the Savannah Harbor. While the issue is water quality in the Savannah Harbor, the potential impact on the Augusta area is significant. The EPA determined that in order to meet the existing water quality standard in the harbor, there would have to be a significant

reduction in the amount of oxygen-demanding discharges into both the harbor and the river upstream as far as J. Strom Thurmond Dam.

The CSRA TMDL Group will be monitoring and helping to remedy the TMDL situation in the Savannah Harbor for current and future use.



N. Max Hicks Tobacco Road Water Treatment Plant preliminarily operational March 2005 with site work continuing.

— UNDER CONSTRUCTION —

PROJECT NAME	ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION	
	COMPLETION	ESTIMATED COST
Brown Road 3 MG Tank Phase II	Complete	\$2,469,600
Sewer System Inspection and Evaluation	Complete	\$600,000
Rae's Creek Relief Interceptor Upgrade Phase I	Complete	\$2,440,349
Samplers for Industrial Customers	Complete	\$452,476
Butler Creek Interceptor Upgrade	April 2005	\$5,986,012
Goodrich Street Raw Water Pump Station Valve Vault Bypass	April 2005	\$1,336,820
N. Max Hicks Tobacco Road Water Treatment Plant	April 2005	\$55,274,830
Peach Orchard Road Water Main Replacement (DOT Project)	April 2005	\$1,581,897
Kissingbower Road Water and Sewer Improvements	June 2005	\$1,633,317
Jamestown Sewer Phase II	June 2005	\$1,789,664
Rae's Creek Relief Interceptor Upgrade Phase II	July 2005	\$5,651,231
Groundwater Treatment Plant #3 20" Water Main	July 2005	\$2,374,491
Horsepen Trunk Sewer Phase IA	December 2005	\$2,161,368
UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS		PROJECT COST
Horsepen Trunk Sewer Phase IB	April 2005	\$1,687,636
Brookwood Drive Water Main	May 2005	\$700,000
Olive Road Sewer Installation	May 2005	\$500,000
Butler Creek Collection Extension (Bel Air Hills)	June 2005	\$3,200,000
Dennis Rd 3 MG Tank and Pump Station	July 2005	\$1,732,000
Fairington Sewer	July 2005	\$5,600,000
Main Inceptor Upgrade	August 2005	\$12,000,000
Highland Avenue Water Treatment Plant Improvements	October 2005	\$45,000,000